

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1 and 3-6 are presented for consideration, with claims 2 and 7-14 having been withdrawn from consideration pursuant to an election of species requirement.

By this amendment, claim 1 has been amended. Support for the amendment may be found in the application, as originally filed. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1 and 3-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,137,535 (Meyers). Applicants traverse this rejection.

In an aspect of Applicants' invention, independent claim 1 recites an image pickup apparatus including a plurality of pixel areas and a plurality of microlenses for forming light into images. The pixel areas are arranged on a single semiconductor chip to be adjacent to each other through a predetermined space. Each of the pixel areas have pixels arranged two-dimensionally, and each of the pixels has a photoelectric conversion unit. The microlenses are arranged on the pixel areas corresponding to each of the pixels and are arranged on the predetermined spaces between the plurality of pixel areas.

Applicants submit that many of these features are not taught or suggested by Meyers.

Meyers relates to a compact digital camera with segmented fields of view. As shown in Meyers, each of plural lenslets 12 is arranged to correspond to an array of pixels. However, nowhere does Meyers teach or suggest that a plurality of microlenses are arranged on a plurality of pixel areas corresponding to each of the pixels, as recited in independent claim 1.

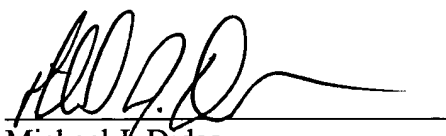
For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claim 1 recites features that patentably define the present invention over Meyers. Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the Section 102 rejection are requested.

The remaining claims depend from one of the independent claims. These claims are deemed allowable by virtue of their dependency from an allowable base claim, and also for reciting other patentable features of Applicants' invention. Favorable and independent consideration of the dependent claims are requested.

In light of the foregoing, Applicants request favorable reconsideration and an early Notice of Allowance.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "MJD", is written over a horizontal line.

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